

Maintenance ORM—It Works!

By CWO3 John Salgado

You've probably heard the expression, "All it takes is one 'idiot' to ruin a perfect maintenance record." Our command recently seemed to have a rash of "idiots." In a three-week period, we almost managed to spread the wings of one aircraft into the port engine of another; one of our line personnel drove off with a hydraulic "jenny," to re-fuel it, while it still was attached to the aircraft, and we damaged a set of flaps while trouble-shooting.

Needless to say, the skipper did not have his happy face on when he called the maintenance-department leadership to his office. In a nutshell, the CO wanted us to immediately take a more aggressive approach toward implementing the ORM principles into everything we did as a maintenance department.

Our senior leadership re-wrote our maintenance Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) to include a more aggressive approach to ORM. The maintenance-safety improvements increased maintenance-khaki presence during these major maintenance evolutions and flight-line operations:


- ✓ Any binding or stuck flight-control discrepancy
- ✓ Installing and operating any flight-control surface
- ✓ Rigging flight controls
- ✓ Drop-checks, to include jacking procedures
- ✓ Removing and installing engines
- ✓ Removing and installing propellers
- ✓ Fuel-cell maintenance
- ✓ Wing spread or fold evolution
- ✓ Removing and replacing landing-gear strut
- ✓ Moving or re-spotting aircraft
- ✓ Engine turn-ups
- ✓ Any non-routine task determined necessary by maintenance control

We now assign responsibility for major maintenance evolutions and provide written standardization to follow. We implemented a major maintenance task pre-evolution brief that is reviewed by all personnel involved with the task and given by maintenance-control CPOs. This brief includes a checklist and ORM considerations for each specific task. Every major evo-



lution also is backed-up with a QA safety brief prior to commencing.

To improve flight-line safety, we incorporated a plane-captain checklist for engine turn-ups, aircraft pre-launches, aircraft moves, and brake riding. We also incorporated an aircraft release form (A-sheet) for maintenance-turn personnel to review and sign prior to manning up, to ensure they review the ADB thoroughly and take responsibility for the conduct of the turn.

The change to our safety posture was immediate and significant. I attended several pre-evolution briefs and felt comfortable that everyone knew his job assignment and was properly briefed on all safety precautions. Ignorance breeds "idiots." Getting everyone on the same page by reviewing the tasks being performed, aggressively implementing ORM, and getting leadership involved goes a long way to reduce the number of "idiots" in any given evolution. 

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Here is a perfect example of the immediate impact intrusive leadership can have within a command. However, the hard part is maintaining this process on a daily basis. Don't let down your guard, and keep up the great work!—Ed.